United Nations A/57/PV.47

General Assembly

Fifty-seventh session

Official Records

47th plenary meeting
Monday, 11 November 2002, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kavan ..... (Czech Republic)

The meeting was called to order at 3:10 p.m.

Agenda item 39

Question of the Falklands Islands (Malvinas)

The President: I should like to inform representatives that, following consultations regarding agenda item 39 on the question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) and taking into account General Assembly decision 56/410 of 26 November 2001, it is proposed that the General Assembly decide to postpone consideration of this item and to include it in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth session.

May I take it therefore that the Assembly, taking into account decision 56/410, wishes to defer consideration of this item and include it in the provisional agenda of the fifty-eighth session?

It was so decided (decision 57/511)

Agenda items 21 (d) and 37

Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan

The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security

Draft resolution (A/57/L.13/Rev.1)

The President: The General Assembly will consider sub-item (d) of agenda item 21, "Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan"; and agenda item 37, "The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security" and draft resolution A/57/L.13/Rev.1 entitled "Open-ended panel of the General Assembly on 'Afghanistan: one year later'".

The idea of organizing a panel discussion on Afghanistan as an interactive dialogue with interested Member States has received overwhelming support from many countries concerned, including the Security Council members, the neighbouring countries and many influential States, such as Germany, France, Italy, Japan, Canada, Saudi Arabia and Egypt, just to name a few.

This panel discussion is also very closely intertwined with my own efforts as the President of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly to revitalize its meetings.

These were the reasons that I decided to link this panel, scheduled for 18 November, with this year's plenary session on Afghanistan, to be held on 6 December. I do strongly believe that the panel discussion can enrich this year's commemoration of the first anniversary of the Bonn Conference and could lead the United Nations to specific conclusions in terms of post-conflict reconstruction in Afghanistan,

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

02-68435 (E)

thereby providing new recommendations for future United Nations activities in this domain.

To achieve these goals, I ask you to be prepared for such a discussion. What I envisage as very important are our attempts to find out what were the lessons learned by the United Nations in Afghanistan. The panel should also give us an opportunity to see the consequences of the decisions adopted by the United Nations and to find out if these decisions were properly implemented. What are the results that these decisions helped us to achieve? Should we modify our humanitarian activities and economic assistance in Afghanistan? What else needs to be done in order for us to achieve United Nations goals in Afghanistan sooner and more effectively? I do truly hope that we will be able to meet these criteria.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Chen (Under-Secretary-General, Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Management): Under operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution A/57/L.13/Rev.1, the General Assembly decides to convene, on 18 November 2002, an open-ended panel on Afghanistan, which will have two consecutive sessions, one from 9 to 11 a.m., and the other, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/57/L.13/Rev.1, no additional expenditure would be required, since the open-ended panel would be convened on a date and time when the plenary would not be in session. The related meeting servicing costs would be met, therefore, from overall resources earmarked for the meetings of the plenary.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/57/L.13/Rev.1.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.13/Rev.1?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 57/8).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (d) of agenda item 21 and agenda item 37.

Agenda item 14 (*continued*)

Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency

Mr. Singh (India): At the outset, let me compliment the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on its completion of 45 years as a unique multidisciplinary international organization, functioning to fulfil its mandate to the satisfaction of all its stakeholders. The Agency is a unique professional body in the area of nuclear science and technology, with the ability and wherewithal to provide solutions to various issues concerning all of us. The Agency has not shied away from adding new dimensions to its activities, while at the same time maintaining a careful balance among all its statutory activities.

The World Summit on Sustainable Development recently concluded its work in Johannesburg. The threat to our global climate due to increasing carbon dioxide emission is even more evident than in the past. Notwithstanding the important role of renewable and other clean energy technologies, and given the magnitude of this problem, there can be no doubt that nuclear power is an inevitable option at the present state of development of advanced energy technologies and can meet the development aspirations of a large fraction of the world's population, while at the same time conforming to the criteria of sustainability. It is ironic that, in spite of its large energy potential, with the capability of meeting sustainable worldwide energy needs without any real or significant environmental impact, the unfounded misconceptions about nuclear energy still dominate and have impeded sustainable development.

At the present juncture, one sees nuclear power simultaneously witnessing stagnation, renaissance and growth in different parts of the world. During the 1990s, the gross generation of nuclear electricity in Asia grew by 63.7 per cent, and the availability of global nuclear energy increased from 73 per cent to over 82 per cent, which is equivalent to adding 33 gigawatts of new generating capacity.

There is growing activity to extend the lives of existing nuclear power plants. This exercise is equivalent to building new reactors in those countries. An integrated view of technology, safety, safeguards and the newly emerging scenario with respect to nuclear terrorism is, however, necessary to find holistic

answers that can eliminate the barriers to large-scale development of nuclear power in a sustainable manner.

Recognizing the important role of nuclear power in meeting long-term energy needs, India has accorded high priority to the self-reliant development of nuclear power in the country. This has enabled a strong indigenous capability in all aspects of the nuclear fuel cycle. Presently, construction on eight more reactors is in progress — the largest number of reactors currently under construction in any country. These units include six pressurized heavy water reactors of indigenous design and two 1,000 megawatt units being set up in cooperation with the Russian Federation. Construction on all projects is progressing in advance of their respective schedules.

Our 14 operating nuclear power reactors have together registered an impressive 85 per cent average annual capacity factor during the past year and, at the same time, have maintained an excellent safety record. In line with keeping our commitment to the preservation of the environment, most of the operating power plants have also obtained Environment Management System (EMS) ISO 14001 certification.

Miss Clarke (Barbados), Vice-President, took the Chair.

We will reach a total nuclear capacity of 6,680 megawatts by 2008, and we intend to achieve 10,000 megawatts by 2012 and 20,000 megawatts by 2020. In order to achieve that objective, given the nuclear resource profile available within the country, we have also carried out considerable work on the design and development of a plutonium-uranium-oxide-fuelled, 500-megawatt prototype fast breeder reactor at Kalpakkam. While the pre-project activities for construction of that reactor are already in progress, we will soon launch the main project.

The expansion of our nuclear power programme is being appropriately supported by the opening of two new uranium mines in Jharkhand State in India. We have also undertaken pre-project activities for the commencement of uranium mining at three more sites. In addition, we have taken significant steps, including reducing specific energy consumption in heavy water production and compressing the construction schedule, so as to make nuclear power even more competitive. In fact, the Indian track record on export controls and fulfilment of its international obligations has been exemplary, to the extent that India has been described as a classic non-proliferator.

While the Indian programme is designed to cater to the country's long-term energy needs, the recent awareness of the impact of carbon dioxide emissions on the global climate has necessitated expeditious large-scale development of nuclear power in India. External additionalities in the nuclear power sector, for which there is a large market in India, could help that process further. However, our efforts to accelerate the development of nuclear power as a sustainable means of producing the clean energy needed to meet the development aspirations of one sixth of humanity are faced with the restrictive export policies of certain countries. It is common knowledge that India's nuclear programme is unique by virtue of its indigenous and comprehensive capabilities, and therefore any proliferation concern over external supplies to India is unfounded. Making external additionalities in nuclear power development in India subject to such irrelevant and unfounded concerns will only increase the dependence on fossil fuel, resulting in damage to the global environment.

Our atomic energy programme has accorded top priority to safety in all its activities and has kept pace with needs, accompanied by the expansion of the nuclear power programme and by the utilization of nuclear technologies for research, health, agricultural and industrial purposes. We have gained close to 200 reactor-years of operating experience, with a good track record in maintaining the safety of operating personnel, of the public and of the environment. Needless to say, safety cannot be divorced from technology. However, it is unfortunate that, in practice, technologies continue to be denied to us, even for systems important to safety.

The IAEA's International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles (INPRO) is a most appropriate and timely measure and will help to overcome barriers to the growth of nuclear power for global sustainable development. We are convinced that such technological solutions are the need of the hour and that they provide superior, cost-effective and comprehensive alternatives to the current segmental approach of dealing separately with technology, safety and safeguards. We have taken an active part in that programme, which the Agency is implementing through extra budgetary resources, and we have also provided cost-free experts. We feel that the time has

come for the Agency to absorb the INPRO programme into its regular budget.

We are glad that the Agency responded promptly to the need for nuclear security following the tragic events of 11 September 2001 by, among other things, setting up an Advisory Group on Nuclear Security. We should eliminate any possibility for terrorists to exploit the potential of using nuclear material and radioactive sources, particularly for blackmail. Although the prime responsibility for the security and safety of nuclear and other radioactive materials and of nuclear facilities rests and must rest with States themselves, the Agency's additional activities can contribute meaningfully to protection against nuclear terrorism. As it does so, we should ensure that it does not add unduly to the sense of apprehension that exists in many quarters concerning the safety of using nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

India has acceded to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, which reinforces its commitment to international instruments against terrorism in general and against nuclear terrorism in particular. More than four decades ago, we in India established strict measures for the physical protection of nuclear material during its use, storage and transport. A multidisciplinary expert group at the highest level ensures that the appropriate measures are implemented in that regard. Such measures are being appropriately upgraded through technological advancements. In addition, an internal physical protection advisory service exists. We have a specially designed human resource development programme to train personnel at various levels for that purpose.

The orphan sources in many countries have been a cause of concern. We have collaborated with the Agency in providing indigenously developed equipment, including an aerial gamma-survey system, and the services of our experts for a ground and aerial survey to search for orphan sources in Georgia.

We are glad that the Agency is dealing with the issue of knowledge management. The gaining of nuclear knowledge in certain parts of the world is an important challenge. The nuclear knowledge pool in India is very large and is expanding in consonance with the rapid growth of the country's nuclear energy programme. One of the challenges that must be addressed by all of us who are engaged in nuclear technology development is to promote a knowledge-based holistic approach across the entire spectrum of the technology-society interface. Further, the linkage among society, industry and the national programme must be visible to college students so that they recognize that there are challenges that need solutions and are motivated to find them. We need to distinguish knowledge transfer from technology transfer, which has obvious constraints that arise out of the commercial context. Knowledge, on the other hand, is enhanced by sharing it with worthy scholars who can sustain the process and also with those who can use it to find new solutions of societal interest.

I must emphasize that any technology will have its associated problems. However, the solutions to such problems also lie in technology. In the evolution of civilization, there have been several examples of technology allowing the enhancement of the quality of life. In the process, some new issues of concern arose; however, such issues were satisfactorily resolved through the further application of technology. We have seen that in the context of energy, transportation, material processing, food, human health and many other areas of human endeavour. Technological empowerment is thus the need of the hour. Continuity of nuclear knowledge and empowerment through nuclear technology to promote global peace and prosperity are our collective responsibility, and we can fulfil that responsibility through the unique organization of the IAEA.

Mr. De Alba (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Mexican delegation wishes to express its appreciation to Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and to all the Agency's staff for their excellent work throughout the year in order to accomplish the many tasks assigned to them by Member States and to confront new challenges with limited financial resources.

The report of the IAEA's activities in 2001 duly reflects the Agency's achievements in promoting international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear technologies and the transfer of those technologies to the developing countries, as well as its efforts to improve the effective regime of nuclear safety and an efficient verification system.

Mexico welcomes the recent approval by the IAEA General Conference of the admission of Eritrea, Kyrgyzstan and the Seychelles to membership of the

Agency, thus broadening the universal commitment to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We are also pleased by the advances made in the strengthening of safeguards, particularly with the approval of a conceptual framework for integrated safeguards and the implementation of those safeguards on a priority basis in an effective and cost-efficient manner.

As regards physical safety and security, Mexico shares the international community's concerns about measures to strengthen the Agency's work aimed at combating and preventing acts of nuclear terrorism. We welcome the progress made to date through the adoption of an action plan to combat nuclear terrorism and through the establishment of a Nuclear Security Fund through voluntary contributions. In this context, and in order to update harmonize views, Mexico is actively promoting the inclusion of ideas and definitions adopted in other international instruments with respect to the definition of illicit conduct; cooperation in judicial matters and extradition; and the development of a draft protocol to amend the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, a fundamental instrument for strengthening measures to prevent a terrorist act against nuclear materials and installations.

We also recognize the Agency's efforts to improve the quality and impact of the Technical Cooperation Programme through the development of better projects in keeping with national priorities and with enhanced socio-economic impact, promoting the optimal use of national and regional capacities. Mexico welcomes the request made by the IAEA General Conference to Mr. ElBaradei that enhanced efforts be made to improve external contracting or subcontracting mechanisms so as to strengthen technical cooperation among developing countries.

Mexico is very pleased by the Agency's progress, in particular with respect to the promotion of food security, the management of water resources and improved human health. These are clear illustrations of the use of nuclear science and technology in support of sustainable development. Mexico welcomes the application of sterile insect technologies because of their considerable effect on human, animal and plant health, with special emphasis on their technical and economic viability. Mexico also believes that it is important to recognize the success of the application of isotopic techniques to the sustainable management of water resources.

We believe that safety and security are among the top priorities in the peaceful uses and applications of nuclear energy. Mexico participated in the second review meeting of contracting parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, at which we submitted our national report. That report was welcomed by the contracting parties, as it reflects the smooth functioning of the Laguna Verde nuclear power plant and the proper implementation of the Convention's provisions through our National Commission of Nuclear Safety and Safeguards, Mexico's nuclear regulatory agency.

Finally, Mexico attaches great importance to the culture of security and, above all, prevention, as reflected in the Agency's 2001 report, in which reference is made to the seminar on self-assessment training for a culture of safety and security, held under IAEA auspices at the Laguna Verde plant in June 2001.

Mr. Hidayat (Indonesia): I would like at the outset to express our appreciation to the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, for his introduction of the Agency's report and the comprehensive statement highlighting its role and activities.

The report portrays a wide range of scientific challenges and how these are sought to be met through safe and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It is gratifying to note that the Agency has continued its invaluable contributions through the strategy of a unified approach to providing technical assistance, safety measures and verification mechanisms. We are hopeful that its role in these endeavours will be further strengthened in the future for the benefit of all States, especially the developing countries.

My delegation wishes to emphasize the importance of promoting a framework of confidence and cooperation within which the transfer of nuclear technology and materials for peaceful purposes can take place, as they play an important role in catering to the requirements of national development. This is essential even for countries that are endowed with abundant natural resources, both current and potential.

Energy has played and will continue to play a principal role in promoting economic and industrial growth, as well as improved human well-being. However, the substantial increase in global energy consumption in the coming decades, which is foreseen in the Agency's report, will be driven principally by the

developing world, especially in Asia, and it cannot be met through resources that are finite. Hence, in our view, nuclear energy remains a strong option offering a sustainable energy future.

In some countries of the Asia-Pacific region, nuclear power is already an important contributor to electricity generation and its role is projected to expand in order to support overall economic growth in the region. This calls for enhanced technical cooperation to facilitate the sustainable development of the developing countries. It is therefore gratifying to note that the transfer of nuclear science and technology to those countries through cooperative programmes — especially in areas such as food and agriculture, fighting disease, managing water resources and ensuring environmental protection — continues to be a principal objective of the Agency.

Indonesia has steadily supported the role of the IAEA in assisting States parties to launch projects within the framework of peaceful uses of nuclear energy based on each country's choices and decisions and the principle of sustainable development. Those activities have facilitated a multiplicity of functions, most notably the optimal utilization of resources, the planning and implementation of nuclear power projects, monitoring their performance, plant reliability and improving technical skills.

According to the report, in the field of health, nuclear techniques have much to offer in the diagnosis and control of non-communicable diseases. New tools have also come to be utilized for combating infectious diseases. Nuclear and related biotechnologies can also facilitate the achievement of food security and address problems relating to malnutrition that afflict a large segment of people living in the developing world.

As far as the aforementioned endeavours are concerned, we gratefully acknowledge the Agency's role, among others, in organizing a regional technical cooperation project on nutritional studies with the participation of Indonesia and other members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations, which also have availed themselves of the Agency's nuclear safety review services and assistance.

The question of ensuring a high level of nuclear safety and security continues to be of critical importance to the international community. An attack on a nuclear power plant or other nuclear installation could result in a massive release of radioactive material with its attendant consequences. Such a dire prospect has been further heightened by nuclear terrorism, which represents a potent danger to global peace and security. The spectre that those weapons could fall into the hands of terrorists demonstrates the priority that all nations must accord to that complex and interrelated issue.

My delegation is, therefore, gratified to note, in that context, that the IAEA is already engaged in a wide range of activities pertinent to combating nuclear terrorism, including nuclear safety cooperation among relevant organizations and member States, programmes to prevent illicit trafficking in nuclear materials, as well as other radioactive sources, and providing advisory services against theft and sabotage.

Currently, the Agency is also considering expansion of the scope and reach of its safety and security services and undertaking a review of existing guidelines and conventions to ensure that they are comprehensive and effective. Meanwhile, the establishment of internationally agreed standards of safety of nuclear installations, the coordination of efforts at the national, regional and global levels and the fostering of information exchange have become imperative.

The Agency's safeguards work as a worldwide system of monitoring and inspection of nuclear materials remains indispensable. States parties to the NPT and member States of the IAEA have addressed the question of deficiencies through the "93 plus 2" programme of enhanced safeguards and have negotiated an additional protocol, to which Indonesia has been one of its early adherents.

The aforementioned programme extends the reach of the Agency's inspectors beyond declared activities, requires Governments to provide extensive information on research and industrial activities, as well as on imports and exports of dual use technologies, and provides the Agency with a comprehensive profile of a country's nuclear activities, enabling IAEA to draw conclusions about its future intentions.

In conclusion, my delegation recognizes the important role of the IAEA as an information source and as a substantial contributor to sustainable development. That has become essential in the context of expanding nuclear programmes in Asia. Innovative projects are under way in many countries, under the

Agency's auspices, that will identify promising technologies.

As in the past, the IAEA, within limited resources, has ensured the effective implementation of a programme that made a constructive contribution to the needs and interests of the developing nations. It also has played an important role in assisting those countries in improving their scientific and technological capabilities.

Mr. Santiago (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the countries of the Common Market of the Southern Cone (MERCOSUR) — Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay — and the associated countries Bolivia and Chile.

I reiterate our satisfaction at seeing that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) continues to be a centre of excellence in promotional and security activities. Our countries appreciate the relations they have with the Agency and, thus, we congratulate Director General Mohamed ElBaradei on his efficient guidance of the secretariat.

The technical cooperation activities promoted by the IAEA have a positive impact on aspirations for peaceful uses of nuclear energy. That is why our countries stress the need to maintain a balance between the Agency's three main pillars. We attach great importance to the potential of technical cooperation, one of the Agency's pillars, for supporting developing countries in the various areas of applying scientific and nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

We highlight in particular a new IAEA-supported technical cooperation project designed to exploit and manage water resources related to the Guarani aquifer system, involving Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay, aimed at expanding and preserving drinking water resources.

Along other lines, our countries consider positive the linkage of the IAEA with other multilateral spheres, particularly with the World Summit on Sustainable Development. In that context, we recall the project entitled Brazil: profile of a country in the development of sustainable energy, developed for the Summit by a committee of experts, in which IAEA technical personnel also participated.

We currently share the concern for the need to strengthen efforts carried out by the Agency to contribute preventing the possibility of terrorist acts against nuclear installations or their use of radioactive material. In that regard, we express our readiness to cooperate in efforts to confront that threat.

We encourage the IAEA secretariat to develop initiatives aimed at improving the level of security of nuclear installations, reactors and the fuel cycle, as well as at issuing updated standards. We recognize that important progress has been made in the area of establishing security standards.

We support in particular the development of the programme to improve the culture of security, for which our country is already serving as headquarters for related activities. We also appreciate the great value of the services of assessment, review and diagnostic missions related to nuclear security.

Similarly, and taking into account the fact that the MERCOSUR countries and Bolivia and Chile attach special importance to the secure transport of radioactive material, we recognize the progress made through IAEA General Conference resolutions and the effort made jointly by the member States and the secretariat during 2001 regarding the revision of relevant regulations, as well as action aimed at their effective incorporation by transport organizations.

We also observe with satisfaction that more countries are using Transport Safety Appraisal Services assessment missions in implementing the Agency's transport regulations. We highlight in particular the event that took place this year in Brazil.

Our countries commit themselves to active participation in the 2003 International Conference on the Safety of Transport of Radioactive Material.

The recent IAEA General Conference, held in September, concluded with the adoption of a significant consensus on that subject. We hope that the 2003 International Conference will achieve a similar level of understanding and dialogue.

With regard specifically to the progress made by the secretariat in defining comprehensive safeguards, we believe that efforts should be intensified, not only for greater effectiveness, to prevent budgetary pressures that produce imbalances in the exercise of the Agency's statutory functions, but also for greater efficiency in verification activities.

In this regard, we also encourage the Agency to step up its positive interaction with other verification bodies, such as the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (ABACC), which has been operating for 10 years. ABACC has been carrying out its verification activities, within its area of application, with great success. We believe that it is a great example of transparency and we hope that its current cooperative relationship with the IAEA will be intensified.

Finally, with regard to the regular budget, we believe that any possible increases in contributions should take into account the balance among the three basic pillars of the Agency, as well as the specific economic situation of our countries. The economic situation in our region prevents our countries from taking on heavy contribution burdens.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on agenda item 14.

I call on the representative of Kuwait who wishes to speak on a point of order.

Ms. Al Mulla (Kuwait): I would like to invoke rule 74 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, to call on the Assembly not to take action on the amendment contained in draft resolution A/57/L.17.

In making this statement, my delegation is following the precedent set last year by the representative of Australia, as the Chairman of the Board of Governors at the time. In view of the intensive and exhaustive process of consultations, which took place in Vienna and here in New York, and which resulted in broad agreement on the current text of the draft, it is the wish of the sponsors that the draft resolution be adopted as it stands.

The request for the motion is also based on the following considerations. First, the amendment contained in draft resolution A/57/L.17 refers to the announced acceptance by Iraq of the unconditional return of inspectors. That matter has already been addressed in the preambular part of draft resolution A/57/L.14. Secondly, the latter part of the amendment refers to an issue that has not been taken up by the Agency. The attention of delegates is drawn to the fact that the draft resolution relates to the work of the Agency. Thirdly, the text of the latter part of the amendment does not reflect in any way the language of resolution GC(46)/RES/15, as adopted by the General Conference of the Agency last September. Indeed, members of the Agency are in general agreement that the language in the draft resolution should faithfully reflect the language used in the resolutions of the General Conference.

The President returned to the Chair.

The representative of Iraq had the opportunity to submit amendments during the consultation process in Vienna. This was done in an open-ended meeting, but there was no support for the amendment submitted at that time for the reasons that I mentioned earlier. In New York, the representative of Iraq again presented the amendment in draft resolution A/57/L.17, and an appeal was made for its withdrawal. As the appeal was not heeded, we have had to resort to a motion that no action be taken. It is with regret that we do so. The motion is not meant to deny any Members the right of expression. It is meant to facilitate the adoption of the draft resolution as it stands. We appeal to all Members to support the motion that no action be taken.

The President: The representative of Kuwait has moved, within the terms of rule 74 of the rules of procedure, that no action be taken on the amendment contained in document A/57/L.17. Let me remind members that rule 74 reads:

> "During the discussion of any matter, a representative may move the adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion. In addition to the proposer of the motion, two representatives may speak in favour of, and two against, the motion, after which the motion shall be immediately put to the vote."

Does any representative wish to speak?

I give the floor to the representative of Iraq.

Mr. Salman (Iraq): My delegation regrets that there has been a request for a motion that no action be taken. This would prevent a Member State from expressing its views in a way that reflects the simple truth, as expressed by the Secretary-General. We also regret that such practices are being tolerated in the General Assembly. The General Assembly was not founded to rubber stamp to draft resolutions presented to it, but to ensure that Member States can fully exercise their rights, as enshrined in the Charter, thus ensuring the transparency and credibility of this organ.

Before action is taken, therefore, I would like to ask delegations to consider the outcome of their vote in setting a precedent on the future role of the Assembly. I kindly request the sponsors to reconsider their position. I would also like to remind Member States that the Charter provided for the right of substantive voting so as to ensure that Member States have the tools to present their positions on matters dealt with in the General Assembly. Taking this into account, I would like to request delegations, regardless of their positions with regard to the amendment that has been introduced, to vote against the motion for no action for the sake of transparency and for the credibility of this organ.

The President: I shall now put to the vote the motion submitted by the representative of Kuwait that no action be taken on the amendment contained in document A/57/L.17.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malta, Mauritius, Monaco, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tonga, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Yugoslavia

Against:

Algeria, Belarus, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Jordan, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Viet Nam, Yemen

Abstaining:

Angola, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Brunei Darussalam, China, Egypt, Ghana, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Lesotho, Malaysia, Mexico, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Venezuela

The motion for no action was carried by 86 votes to 11, with 26 abstentions.

The President: Since the motion for no action has been adopted, no action will be taken on the amendment contained in document A/57/L.17. We shall therefore proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/57/L.14.

I shall call on those speakers wishing to speak in explanation of vote before the vote.

Mr. Jon (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will reserve time to speak before the end of the discussion on this item, in order to explain its views and position on the nuclear issue in the Korean peninsula, in response to the statements made by several delegations this morning. Because of the statements made, we cannot support the draft resolution. We will vote against draft resolution A/57/L.14.

Mr. Salman (Iraq): With regard to the decision on the recent motion, my delegation has no other choice than to ask for a separate vote on the twelfth preambular paragraph for the following reasons. First, it does not welcome Iraq's decision of September to allow the unconditional return of the inspectors and the agreement with the Director-General of the IAEA on the practical arrangements needed for the inspections. Secondly, it introduced new language that is meant to accommodate political aims that will serve aggressive policies, taking into account that such language was not included in last year's resolution, before Iraq's decision to allow the inspectors to return. Thirdly, it does not refer to Iraq's cooperation since 2000 with the IAEA in carrying out its mandate according to the safeguards agreement. Having said that, I ask delegations to vote against the twelfth preambular paragraph.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote before the vote. Before proceeding,

I would like to announce that since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become cosponsors of draft resolution A/57/L.14: Armenia, Belgium, Costa Rica, Estonia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Jordan and Switzerland.

A separate vote has been requested on the third preambular paragraph, the twelfth preambular paragraph, operative paragraph 5 and operative paragraph 10 of draft resolution A/57/L.14. Are there any objections to those requests? As there are none, we shall proceed accordingly.

I now put to the vote the third preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/57/L.14. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia

Against:

India, Israel

Abstaining:

Ghana, Lesotho, Pakistan

The third preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/57/L.14 was adopted by 132 votes to 2, with 3 abstentions.

The President: I shall now put to the vote the twelfth preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/57/L.14. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of

Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Algeria, Bangladesh, Cuba, India, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Morocco, Myanmar, Pakistan, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Venezuela, Viet Nam

The twelfth preambular paragraph was adopted by 122 votes to none, with 15 abstentions.

The President: I shall now put to the vote operative paragraph 5 of draft resolution A/57/L.14. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Ghana, India, Israel, Pakistan, Syrian Arab Republic

Operative paragraph 5 of draft resolution A/57/L.14 was retained by 132 votes to none, with 5 abstentions.

[*Subsequently, the delegation of Georgia informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.*]

The President: I now put to the vote operative paragraph 10 of draft resolution A/57/L.14.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon

Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia

Against:

Israel, United States of America

Abstaining:

Viet Nam

Operative paragraph 10 of draft resolution A/57/L.14 was retained by 134 votes to 2, with 1 abstention.

The President: I now put to the vote draft resolution A/57/L.14 as a whole.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia

Against:

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Abstaining:

Angola, Viet Nam

Draft resolution A/57/L.14 was adopted by 138 votes to 1, with 2 abstentions (resolution 57/9).

The President: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their votes on the resolution just adopted.

May I remind representatives that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Gosal (Canada): Canada voted in favour of resolution 57/9, entitled "Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency"

While the resolution is, in fact, a report on the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)'s activities for the last year, the report, unfortunately, does not reflect the most recent developments that have occurred, especially in regards to reports on the admission by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea about its undeclared uranium enrichment programme. It is for this reason that Canada does not believe that the thirteenth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 11 accurately reflect the situation, which has evolved as of today.

However, we acknowledge that the resolution was drafted on the basis of consensus and that it only reflects developments which occurred up to 20 September 2002. It was on the basis of that consensus that Canada was able to continue to accept the language found in those paragraphs. However, we would like to note that Canada will continue to support the IAEA's efforts to address these issues as quickly as possible.

With respect to the resolution as a whole, we believe that a shorter, more focused text that does not attempt to summarize the General Conference's work should be considered in the future.

Mr. Wu Haitao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China has consistently supported the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and appreciates the activities and achievements of the Agency in the past year. The Chinese delegation therefore voted in favour of resolution 57/9 on the report of the IAEA.

The Chinese delegation wishes to explain its position on the nuclear situation on the Korean peninsula. First, the principled position of the Chinese Government on this issue has not changed. We have always believed that the process of denuclearization, peace and stability on the Korean peninsula should be maintained. Secondly, concerned parties, on the basis of equality and mutual respect, should implement in good faith agreements reached. Thirdly, We stand for a peaceful solution of related issues through dialogue and consultation.

Mr. Shringla (India): India, a founding member of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), attaches the highest importance and value to the objectives of the Agency. Since resolution 57/9 pertains to the activities of the IAEA, we voted in its favour.

Nonetheless, we have considerable difficulty with the third preambular paragraph. The language of that paragraph appears to link adherence to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the freedom to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Article II of the Statute of the IAEA, which must guide all our deliberations on the activities of the Agency, calls on the Agency to

> "accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world".

Further, the Statute stresses the principle of the sovereign equality of all its members. The purpose of these provisions of the Statute of the IAEA is obviously to encourage the unfettered access of member States to the peaceful uses of atomic energy without any discrimination whatsoever, albeit with appropriate safeguards.

The IAEA Statute predates the NPT and, besides, the Agency has not been designated as a Secretariat of the NPT. The Agency merely implements its safeguards for different member States in accordance with their agreements, and the concept of safeguards itself predates the NPT. The NPT is not an equitable treaty. Also the provisions of article VI of the NPT should not have been fulfilled by the nuclear weapon States. Therefore the NPT should not be used for discriminating between members of the IAEA. By inferring that adherence by itself to the NPT, on which my Government's views are well known, would imply access to peaceful uses of atomic energy, the resolution deviates from, and in fact derogates from the objectives enshrined in the statute of the IAEA. We have, therefore, been constrained to call for a vote on preambular paragraph 3 and I have voted against it.

Mr. Govrin (Israel): During the negotiations on this resolution in Vienna, Israel made no secret that while supporting the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) annual report, it had reservations regarding certain paragraphs of this resolution, including operative paragraph 10. Israel stood ready to discuss the language of this paragraph and proposed alternative suggestions, but unfortunately, to no avail. Therefore, as it did last year, Israel lamentably had to vote against operative paragraph 10 of this resolution.

Israel believes that the language of operative paragraph 10 is clearly inconsistent with the consensus that was reached over the past eight years in the IAEA General Conference on the resolution entitled "Application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East". Israel strongly opposes the attempt to use the IAEA annual report in order to change the meaning of this consensus resolution. I would like to remind representatives that the consensus on the resolution was difficult to establish in the first place and it has been maintained by preserving a delicately balanced text that all parties could accept.

Operative paragraph 10 of the resolution on the report of the IAEA interrupts this balance. Taking certain issues out of the overall context, while ignoring other elements of the consensus language, is bound to jeopardize the spirit of consensus and will ultimately harm the credibility of the resolutions of the IAEA General Conference.

For this reason Israel voted against operative paragraph 10 of this resolution. Israel has nevertheless

supported the resolution as a whole out of recognition of the IAEA's important role, especially when it comes to dealing with challenges to international security in the nuclear domain. Israel can only hope that next year, this unfruitful process of negotiations on this resolution will be avoided.

On behalf of the State of Israel I would like to take this opportunity to commend the IAEA Director General for presenting the annual report of the Agency to the General Assembly.

Mr. Chaudhry (Pakistan): I have taken the floor to explain Pakistan's position on the draft resolution entitled "Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency" as contained in document A/57/L.14. My delegation has abstained on preambular paragraph 3 and operative paragraph 5.

The language of preambular paragraph 3 links the right to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes with the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). We have always maintained that this preambular paragraph on technical assistance should refer to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Statute only. Since Pakistan is not a party to the NPT, we cannot accept any commitment on its behalf.

Our second concern is the operative paragraph 5, on comprehensive safeguards, which we consider discriminatory and an attempt to keep developing countries from acquiring nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. In our view, the IAEA's role is to facilitate technical safeguards and not indulge in taking political decisions. However, our policy for promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy has enabled us to vote in favour for the resolution as a whole.

The President: We have now heard the last speaker in explanation of vote after the vote. A representative has requested to express the right of reply. May I remind Members that statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to ten minutes for the first intervention, and five for the second one, and should be made by the delegates from their seats.

I now call on the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Mr. Jon (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would like to state its position on the so-called nuclear issue of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in response to the statements made by the delegation of Denmark, who spoke on behalf of the European Union, and the delegations of Japan, Australia, the United States and South Korea.

My delegation would like, first, to point out that the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula is not a question to be dealt with at the United Nations or the IAEA, in view of its origin and substance. Solutions of any issue should be based on an objective and impartial analysis of the essence of the issue, while looking for realistic ways and means to address it.

The IAEA submits every year its annual report to the United Nations General Assembly that contains stereotyped and unrealistic contents on the nuclear issue of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The unilateral and coercive debate that is undertaken, as we see today, does not in any manner assist in arriving at a proper solution.

The nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula originated when the United States massively stockpiled nuclear weapons in South Korea and its vicinity, threatening the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Against the background of the then-prevailing international political environment of the late 1980s and early 1990s, the United States raised the so-called nuclear doubt about our country with the aim of destroying us. This issue is, in essence, a product of the hostile policy of the United States towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and, therefore, should be resolved between the two countries.

In 1994, the Agreed Framework was signed between the two countries in order to address the nuclear issue, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has been implementing it in good faith. If the Agreed Framework were to be implemented, it would automatically follow that the safeguards agreement would be carried out.

Under the Agreed Framework, we froze the nuclear facilities considered by the United States as its concern. We continue to maintain the freeze and have completed the storage of spent fuel. Thus, we have long ago carried out our obligations under the Agreed Framework. However, the United States is not carrying out any of its obligations under the Agreed Framework. Under article I of the Framework, the United States is obliged to provide light water reactors to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by the year 2003 in return for the freezing by the Democratic

People's Republic of Korea of graphite moderated reactors and their related facilities.

Eight years have passed since we froze our nuclear facilities, but the United States has only recently started the ground concrete tamping for the light water reactor. Prospects for construction of the light water reactor are very bleak. That will only result in our suffering an annual loss of 1,000 megawatts in 2003, when the first light water reactor was scheduled to be completed, and in 2004, when the second light water reactor was scheduled to be completed. Thereafter, we will suffer an annual loss of 2,000 megawatts.

Under article 2 of the Framework, the two sides are obliged to move towards full normalization of their political and economic relations. Over the past eight years, however, the United States has persistently pursued its hostile policy towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and has maintained economic sanctions against it. The United States has gone so far as to list the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as part of the "axis of evil".

Under article 3 of the Framework, the United States is obliged to give formal assurances to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea against the threat or use of nuclear weapons. On the contrary, the United States has put our country on its list of targets for a pre-emptive nuclear strike.

Under article 4 of the Framework, and in paragraph 7 of its confidential minutes, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is to allow nuclear inspections only after the delivery of essential non-nuclear components for the first light water reactor unit, including turbines and generators, is completed. But the United States has already come out with a unilateral demand for nuclear inspections and even carries on a campaign to apply pressure on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, misleading international opinion into thinking that we are violating the Framework.

Those are the prevailing circumstances surrounding the so-called nuclear issue. Under those circumstances, what is really the concern expressed by those countries in their statements? Is it their concern at seeing the self-defensive capability to cope with the direct threat and annihilation policy of the largest nuclear power? Is it their concern that we do our utmost to defend the sovereignty and the right to existence of our nation and people? Is it their concern at witnessing opposition to high-handed behaviour and a way of thinking based on power supremacy in international relations?

The fact that the United States lists our country as a part of an axis of evil and as a target for a pre-emptive nuclear strike constitutes an open challenge to that country's obligations under the Agreed Framework. This amounts to the declared nullification of the Framework.

Because the United States has adopted the policy of launching a pre-emptive nuclear strike against our country, it has violated the basic spirit of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). It has also made a dead letter of the inter-Korean joint declaration on the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. The number one violator of the NPT is, in fact, the United States. That is the reality which is ignored. It is unrealistic and unfair at this point to unilaterally urge implementation of the safeguards agreement.

Since the United States threatens by force the sovereignty of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as never before, politicizing the question of a pre-emptive nuclear strike, and since the fate of the Agreed Framework is at the crossroads between life or death, we have recently put forward a proposal for concluding a non-aggression treaty between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. This reflects the will and desire of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to end the grave situation on the Korean peninsula and to safeguard the peace and security of Korea and North-East Asia.

We urge the United States to give our proposal further serious consideration. It is a most reasonable and realistic proposal for resolving the nuclear issue against the backdrop of the prevailing situation in Korea. However, we note that the Bush administration rejects our proposal for a non-aggression treaty and, instead, insists that we first scrap our so-called nuclear weapons programme. Rejection of the proposal to conclude a non-aggression treaty would mean that the United States has the intention of attacking the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea, a small and divided country, values its sovereignty and right to existence more than life itself and regards the removal of threats to its sovereignty and the right to

existence as the criteria for settling all issues concerning the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

We make it clear that the insistence of the United States that we first scrap our nuclear weapons programme constitutes a direct threat to us, and it should be kept in mind that this will inevitably spark a new clash. If this is the case, we are compelled to exercise our power and are prepared to cope with that kind of situation.

My delegation draws the Assembly's attention to the fact that the United States has abruptly taken up the nuclear issue at the very point in time when relations between North and South Korea and between Japan and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are developing positively.

It should be noted that one of the reasons why the United States abruptly raised the nuclear issue is to interrupt the progress in relations between North and South Korea and between Japan and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Now the United States is trying to create an atmosphere of pressure for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea through its so-called policy coordination with its allies. In this regard, we particularly urge the countries neighbouring Korea not to follow blindly the United States policy on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It is necessary to have second thoughts: such blind action might do harm to themselves.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the United States.

Mr. Michaels (United States of America): The United States has no nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula. We have no plans to place nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula. We welcome a nuclear-weapon-free Korean Peninsula. Finally, we have no plans to attack North Korea. We seek a peaceful resolution to the tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

The President: I understand that the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has asked for a second intervention in exercise of right of reply. Let me remind the representative that the limit is five minutes.

Mr. Jon (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): If the United States wants in earnest the peace and security of the Korean Peninsula and its vicinity, it should cease its hostile policy towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The hostile policy towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a full reflection of the pursuit by the United States of its unilateral interests in North-East Asia. As long as the hostile policy of the United States towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea persists, a second and third nuclear problem might arise at any time, which the United States sees as necessary, and peace and security of the region would remain as elusive as ever.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 14?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 34

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Draft resolution (A/57/L.15/Rev.1)

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina to introduce draft resolution A/57/L.15/Rev.1.

Mr. Kusljugić (Bosnia and Herzegovina): I should like to announce that, since the publication of draft resolution A/57/L.15/Rev.1, the following countries have become sponsors: Bulgaria, Canada, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Kuwait, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Singapore, Sweden and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

There has not been a session of the General Assembly since 1992 on whose agenda my country has not been an item, which indicates that it has been a major international problem. It is regularly discussed in the context of the annual reports of the Office of the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) and several other annual reports. It is considered during Security Council meetings, and resolutions concerning it are prepared and adopted annually.

I should like to remind the Assembly why my country has been a major international problem for so long. On 22 May 1992, Bosnia and Herzegovina became a member of the United Nations family. By that time, it was clear that the civilian population would be the main victim of the aggression against the new Bosnian State, since the first atrocities had already occurred. We in Bosnia and Herzegovina had expected that the international community, represented in the United Nations, would react decisively and quickly to prevent the further suffering of civilians. Unfortunately, we waited for such action by the international community for more than three years. Instead of taking resolute action to stop the war, the international community decided to intervene with a peacekeeping force — the United Nations Protection Force — and to provide humanitarian assistance.

The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was called a problem from hell, practically unsolvable. Indeed, we in Bosnia and Herzegovina were living in hell from 1992 to 1995, but we did not think that the problem was unsolvable. We knew that the root cause of the war was the reappearance of extreme nationalism and aggression against the Bosnian State, with the objective of destroying Bosnian multi-ethnic society and of creating ethnically "pure" territories. We knew that the war had been planned and ignited outside Bosnia and Herzegovina. We knew that the root cause of the conflict was not a historic and ancient hatred among Bosnia's ethnic groups, as enemies of the new Bosnian State claimed. Unfortunately, at the time, many in the international community did not understand or have the necessary determination to stop the war and to prevent further atrocities. Recent trials at The Hague have proved that they were wrong, and we hope that the international community has learned a lesson in Bosnia.

However, the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina have paid a painful price for that lesson. The price paid by the Bosnian people is well known: more than 6 per cent of them were killed or are missing, and more than half were displaced. The worst European war crimes since the end of the Second World War were committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the country's physical infrastructure and economy were destroyed. Dark symbols of the suffering of the civilian population were ethnic cleansing, detention camps, systematic mass rape, torture, besieged cities and, finally, the darkest page in human history, the genocide in the United Nations "safe area" of Srebrenica. Despite all that, recent developments in my country show substantial progress in the process of rebuilding a multi-ethnic, democratic, sustainable and modern Bosnia and Herzegovina that will be fully integrated into European structures.

I am pleased to announce, as we enter the second decade of our full membership in the United Nations, that Bosnia and Herzegovina will soon no longer be on the agenda of United Nations bodies. The draft resolution on behalf of the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina that is on the agenda today — the last one in a 10-year sequence — provides an overall picture of the current situation and of progress achieved over the past year, and it contains recommendations for action in the near future.

In general, there has recently been significant progress in the stabilization and normalization of the situation in my country. That is a result of the joint efforts of Bosnia's authorities and of representatives of the international community. In the past year alone, Bosnia and Herzegovina fulfilled the necessary conditions to become a member of the Council of Europe and joined that body; met the requirements of the road map in order to sign a Stabilization and Association Agreement with the European Union; successfully prepared and organized general elections for the first time in its post-war history; promptly participated in global efforts against terrorism; developed the State Border Service to its full capacity and substantially reduced illegal migration; further improved bilateral relations with its neighbouring countries, the Republic of Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; signed bilateral free trade agreements with the countries involved in the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe; and reduced its military assets and established the Standing Committee on Military Matters, with the objective of future admission to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's Partnership for Peace programme. Additionally, the international community successfully carried out the final activities of UNMIBH's mandate, prepared arrangements for its transition to the European Union Police Mission and reorganized its work by adopting a more efficient, streamlined organizational model.

We consider the progress achieved last year as only one phase in the long-term transitional process from war to peace, from a destroyed economy to sustainable development and from war-torn State

structures to sustainable, modern and efficient State institutions. I should now like to focus on the major problems that remain.

The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, also known as the Dayton-Paris Peace Agreement, is a legally binding document that sets out principles for the future organization of the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, in the seven years since it was signed, it has been used more as a tool of obstructionists to stop the State's progress and to impede the development of common State institutions than as a foundation that can be further built upon for the benefit of the entire country and its people. Further development of political structures, in accordance with European human rights standards and with the requirements of Euro-Atlantic associations, is one of our most urgent priorities.

The problem of indicted war criminals who are still at large after seven years remains a painful and frustrating issue that burdens my country's past and clouds its future. Reconciliation and confidence-building will not be possible unless the individuals responsible for atrocities and genocide are tried and sentenced. The fact that such individuals are being sheltered in the neighbouring country only aggravates this matter and raises doubts regarding their desire for good neighbourly relations.

Miss Clarke (Barbados), Vice-President, took the Chair.

A major remaining priority is to establish the rule of law. We realize that the corruption and the lack of transparency seriously hamper economic development in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and we expect that the restructured police and judiciary system will combat corruption and other illegal activities more successfully. The long overdue process of restructuring Bosnia and Herzegovina's court system at all levels, the establishment of the State Court, the further development of sustainable law enforcement structures, based on the foundations laid by the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, are some of the priorities in this sector.

The economy of the country is in a poor state, and unless it is given new life by fresh venture capital, it might present a source of instability in the future. The authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina are determined to create a self-sustainable, market-oriented economy, operating in a single economic space, to complete as soon as possible the process of privatization, further improve banking and capital markets, reform financial systems, and provide adequate social protection. The recently adopted "Jobs and Justice" program makes a good foundation and gives hopes that an environment making possible the inflow of foreign investment and an outburst of private initiative will shortly be created.

Even though refugees have been returning and property restored in recent years, we should not lose momentum. It is evident that security has been improved significantly throughout the country. However, the fulfilment of Annex VII of the Peace Agreement is another task, closely linked to the success of the economic recovery and establishing the rule of law.

Corruption, organized crime and illegal criminal activities seriously hamper improvement in all the previously mentioned areas. Criminal networks operate on a regional basis; they have neither nationality nor religion. My country will spare no effort to capture those individuals or groups of individuals and it is ready to cooperate with neighbouring countries, countries in the region and the international community to complete this task. In this context, I would like to mention that the ill repute, recently brought upon my country by disregarding United Nations Security Council resolutions is also the fault of irresponsible individuals, essentially criminals, who will be brought to justice.

The implementation of necessary structural reforms, intended to solve the mentioned problems, will require assistance from the international organizations that are willing to participate and to aid. The Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina is committed to working together with the international community to fulfil the vision of developing a modern, democratic, multiethnic, viable European country. It is on the basis of that vision that we face the important challenges and tremendous tasks ahead of us.

I would also like to announce the revision of the draft resolution (A/57/L.15/Rev.1) in operative paragraph 7. The paragraph should start with "notes" instead of "also welcomes".

Mr. Moesby (Denmark): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia,

Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia — and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, and the European Free Trade Association countries of the European Economic Area Norway and Iceland align themselves with this statement.

Last month the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, briefed the Security Council on his efforts to assist the reform process. His briefing reinforced the impression of continued progress in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but at the same time stressed that there are still major tasks to be accomplished in the coming months. The European Union has already welcomed progress in relation to the "Road Map", the first step in the EU Stabilisation and Association Process for Bosnia and Herzegovina. Accelerated reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina would undoubtedly put the country on the road to further European integration.

Bosnia and Herzegovina went to the polls on 5 October. Seven years after the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement, politicians were elected for the first time for a period of four years. It was also the first time the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina assumed responsibility for the election process themselves. The European Union commends the electoral authorities for their professional organization of the elections, which were carried out in a peaceful manner.

At the same time the European Union regrets the low participation in the elections. The High Representative characterized it as a protest vote. The people of Bosnia and Herzegovina have shown their disappointment with the inadequate progress towards generating change and building a better future. It is a call for a more efficient political system and faster economic and social reforms. Thus, the European Union urges the rapid formation of effective governments genuinely committed to increasing the pace of the reform process. The European Union would like to reconfirm its strong commitment to actively assisting Bosnia and Herzegovina in this effort.

To a much greater extent than before all countries in the region should take responsibility for their own development. This applies to Bosnia and Herzegovina as well. With aid falling, and debt mounting, economic reforms have become more urgent than ever to attract much-needed foreign investments to fill the gap. The European Union, together with other institutions and fora, such as the Stability Pact, has given considerable support to the reform process in the region.

Political elites as well as the general public have to identify with the reform processes bringing them closer to Europe. Institution-building must be strengthened and the local level should be involved in the reform process in a more effective way. Furthermore, greater emphasis should be given to civil society, especially youth and women and their participation in society, politics, and education. The international community must continue to support this process.

The existence of organized crime and corruption prevents the roots of progress and democratic developments from taking hold. Organized crime is a threat to the rule of law, to democracy and human rights as well as to social progress and economic reform. It is a threat to security and stability. Unless these destructive structures are broken down the international efforts to promote democracy and economic development will not be sustainable.

The fight against organised crime in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Western Balkans as a whole is therefore high on the agenda for the European Union. Together with the United Kingdom, the European Union is preparing a Conference on Organized Crime in South Eastern Europe. The conference will take place in London on 25 November and will be a good opportunity for the countries in the region to make commitments within existing mechanisms and to set clear targets in the fight against organized crime.

The international community has identified the following priority areas as crucial for the reform process in Bosnia and Herzegovina: rule of law, institution building and the economy, as well as the return of refugees and reconstruction. The former High Representative, Ambassador Wolfgang Petritsch, successfully promoted those priorities and the European Union would like to thank him for his extraordinary commitment to the development of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It is now crucial to invigorate the pace of reform. Strengthening the rule of law is an essential part of the democratisation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Developing a well-functioning judiciary and State administration are prerequisites for the stability of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The European Union fully

supports High Representative Paddy Ashdown in his "Justice and Jobs" programme, and we commend the results already achieved in this field. Reform in the economic sector is key to prosperity for Bosnia and Herzegovina, in particular with a view to creating jobs and raising personal income. This will lead to tangible improvements in living standards. Restarting the economy and creating sustainable development through the adoption of structural reforms should be a priority in the work of the future Government. The implementation of these reforms will be a precondition for continued international financial assistance.

The rule of law approach also includes full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia by all States and parties of the region. This constitutes a non-negotiable requirement of international law. In this regard, access to witnesses and archives is essential.

The European Union remains determined that all those indicted for war crimes should be brought to justice. The continuing impunity of persons indicted on various counts of genocide must end. The Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as of both entities must spare no effort to locate, arrest and transfer such persons to the custody of the International Tribunal.

The European Union has with great concern learned of the arms exports from Bosnia and Herzegovina through the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to Iraq. This is a violation of United Nations sanctions and demands a swift response from the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina at both the State and entity level. The current investigations have illustrated the need for an accelerated defence reform and a transfer of competencies for arms exports from the entity to the State level. The recent commitment of the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to take action in this regard is a step forward which will require immediate implementation. The European Union would like to underline the crucial importance of establishing State-level control over the export of military weapons and equipment.

The European Union emphasizes the need for a sustainable solution to the issue of displaced persons. In recent years there has been a steady improvement in the return figures. In 2002 alone there have been more than 60,000 registered returns, resulting in a total of almost 900,000 returnees. But still more needs to be done in order to create a favourable climate for returnees. The European Union therefore strongly regrets local obstruction to returns and urges all authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina to honour their commitment to address outstanding legal and administrative issues in this regard. The adequate attribution of resources by the Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities towards the sustainability of the process of the return of refugees and internally displaced persons is of utmost importance.

The European Union noted with satisfaction that the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) has been prolonged until the end of the year. UNMIBH has now, after seven years, successfully fulfilled its mandate in the area of police reform and restructuring. The prolongation will ensure an orderly transition to the European Union Police Mission, which will take over on 1 January 2003. I am happy to inform the Assembly that the Status of Forces Agreement between the European Union and Bosnia and Herzegovina was signed in Sarajevo last month, enabling the EU Police Mission to take over when the United Nations Mission ends its work.

In this context, the European Union would like to stress the importance of enhanced cooperation and coordination among different international actors in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Through the Stabilization and Association Process and the EU Police Mission, the European Union will continue to work with the authorities and the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina in their endeavours to build a well-functioning multi-ethnic society.

Mr. Kulyk (Ukraine): Only a few weeks ago, the Security Council and interested Member States heard an open briefing on current political developments in the country by the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, and the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Mr. Jacques Paul Klein.

Their key common message was distinct enough. Bosnia and Herzegovina remains on the right path. There may be some bumps in the road, but the direction is clear.

Next week will mark the seventh year since the end of the war in Bosnia. It is obviously more difficult to organize peace than to win a war. The very fact that we all — Bosnia and Herzegovina, together with the international community — have succeeded in going this far in implementing the Dayton-Paris Peace

Agreement is indeed evidence of the viability of its design and of the realistic approach taken to its realization.

Peace has taken root within the country. Nearly a million refugees have returned to their homes; tangible progress has been made in the consolidation of State institutions; positive changes are visible in the economic sphere; a comprehensive reform of the judicial system has been instituted; the police and armed forces are being overhauled; the number of illegal migrants is down; and the overall crime rate has been reduced.

However, this list of practical successes is far from exhaustive. The recent accession of Sarajevo to the Council of Europe is proof of the encouraging changes on the ground. We believe that the involvement of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the process of European integration is the only way to finally overcome the consequences of war.

In this regard, it is important for the international community to send a strong message to the winners of the 5 October general elections that their victory means, first and foremost, the additional responsibility of making progress in pursuit of the reforms. We congratulate the Bosnian authorities on the impressive job they did in ensuring the democratic, free and fair character of the elections, and we join those delegations that believe that the results of those elections reflect the will to speed up substantially the pace of political and economic transformation.

The newly elected leaders should now demonstrate in practice their readiness to fulfil the responsibilities that have been entrusted to them.

In a broader international context, such a task requires further steps to strengthen regional stability. My country warmly welcomes the results of the trilateral summit of the heads of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Yugoslavia and Croatia, held in Sarajevo on 15 July 2002, and notes with satisfaction the development of active cooperation among those countries. We encourage our partners to continue and enhance this vital trend.

The ambitious reform plan recently presented by Paddy Ashdown should provide the Bosnian leaders with a clear vision of the concrete steps that need to be taken immediately.

My delegation endorses the High Representative's six priority tasks for further reform in the coming six months. The strengthening of the rule of law and the advancement of economic reforms must remain key elements of the recovery strategy for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Along with other urgent issues, we wish to reaffirm the importance of ensuring national minority rights in the country. The Ukrainian community is the fourth-largest ethnic group in Bosnia and Herzegovina. At present, there is a further need to improve the conditions for their national and cultural revival.

My delegation calls upon the Bosnian authorities to continue their efforts to protect minority rights. We also hope that the new law on national minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina will become a practical and useful instrument that will allow minorities to exercise their rights according to European standards.

Seven years of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina are about to end. On behalf of the Government of Ukraine, I would like to pay tribute to the men and women of the Mission, led by Special Representative Jacques Paul Klein. We commend the positive results achieved by the Mission in the areas of police reform, police restructuring, institution-building and inter-police-force cooperation.

My delegation hopes that the practical goals determined by UNMIBH will be successfully implemented by the EU follow-on mission.

The intention of the European Union to make a leading contribution to the streamlining of the overall civilian and police presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a fundamental step, which should accelerate further positive changes in that country.

Having already expressed our interest in being involved in the EU-led military crisis-management operations and in processes related to the European security and defence policy, including its military and civilian aspects, my Government reiterates its readiness to contribute to the EU Police Mission.

Let me conclude by expressing my country's utmost support for the intense efforts of Bosnia and Herzegovina to build a democratic and prosperous society, with respect for the rule of law and for the rights of each and every citizen. We remain committed to achieving these goals and intend to continue our

active participation in international efforts aimed at bringing peace and stability to the country.

Mr. Bozay (Turkey): Turkey aligns itself with the statement already made by the representative of Denmark on behalf of the European Union. I shall therefore confine myself to commenting briefly on those points which have particular importance as seen from the perspective of my country.

At the outset, I would like to remind this body that Turkey, which is also a Balkan country, has always been directly involved in efforts geared towards the establishment of peace and stability in the region. Fostering friendly relations and cooperation among the countries of the Balkans has been, and remains, the most reliable and productive avenue to this end. Bosnia and Herzegovina has been at the forefront of our concerns, given our shared history and the ties we have with that country.

As a member of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council, Turkey is a strong supporter of the key strategic targets set by that body. The consolidation of state institutions, the pursuit of economic reform and the return of refugees and internally displaced persons are therefore the main priorities of my country in reviewing the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We note the considerable achievements in all of these areas, as well as the serious challenges that remain, as Bosnia moves towards European integration, which is its destiny. Reconciliation among the constituent people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is a prerequisite for sustainable stability and development in the country, must continue.

Earlier Governments endeavoured to achieve such reconciliation by political, judicial and economic reform. Unfortunately, a commonly agreed and coherent agenda in pursuing these reforms was lacking. This had negative repercussions on the daily lives of Bosnians, who understandably manifested their dissatisfaction through the low level of their participation in the elections and the level of the protest vote.

In this vein, Turkey supports the "Justice and Jobs" programme of the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, which is a well-designed agenda for pursuing those reforms. We call upon the newly elected representatives of Bosnia to form a Government at the earliest opportunity in order to engage themselves in this agenda. The Bosnian people are waiting for that, and as Lord Ashdown suggested in his recent report to the Secretary-General, the international community will also judge the incoming Governments at the State and entity level by their commitment to reform. The inherent message of the protest votes is clear: Bosnians want reform.

The priorities of the international community in Bosnia and Herzegovina are justice, and then jobs, through reform. This being understood, the international community has put its efforts on a new footing, placing a new emphasis on the rule of law. The entrenched power structures in various cantons, cities and public enterprises are among the main obstacles to establishing the true rule of law in Bosnia. The new Governments at the State and entity level should work in earnest to eliminate these power structures and fully cooperate with the international presence in Bosnia to this end.

In the same vein, the Government should thoroughly implement economic reforms, which will stimulate domestic production and foreign investment, and pursue effective policies for collecting or generating sufficient revenue. This is vital with regard to the "jobs" dimension of Lord Ashdown's agenda, and it is necessary in order to convince the international community that its financial assistance will be efficiently utilized within the framework of reform.

One of the serious hurdles for the justice and jobs dimension of the reform agenda is the situation of the indicted war criminals. We welcome the fact that so far a considerable number of them have been apprehended. Many are still at large, however. On this matter, we need the cooperation of the respective Governments. Inter-ethnic respect and confidence need to be consolidated by bringing to justice Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic. Moreover, they are still casting dark shadows upon political and economic life in Bosnia, and might endanger the overall reform agenda of the High Representative.

The return of refugees and internally displaced persons is the litmus test of the Dayton Accords. Improved security conditions, a more cooperative and receptive political mind-set, which is lacking in some areas, as well as countrywide implementation of property legislation, may positively affect the returns.

As I say this, I am well aware of the vital need for the success of the economic reforms in Lord Ashdown's programmes in order to achieve a meaningful number of returns.

In tackling those challenges, I believe that in the future we should not shy away from commending those parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina that cooperate. That would be a sign of international support for those parties and would also serve to encourage them to stay on a prudent path.

I would like to emphasize that the last paragraph of draft resolution A/57/L.15, entitled "The Situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina", requests the Secretary-General to prepare a comprehensive report on the United Nations activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina covering the period 1992-2002. We look forward to seeing that report, as it will give us a chance to review the lessons learned as well as the best practices from the United Nations experience in Bosnia.

I should also like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to Mr. Jacques Paul Klein, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Coordinator of the United Nations Operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, for the tremendous job he has done there. We hope that the European Union Police Mission will carry the flag of success that the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina achieved under the able administration of Mr. Klein.

In the history of Bosnia, bridges mean more than their physical function might suggest. They have now become symbols of reconciliation, and the constituent people of Bosnia and Herzegovina would like them to remain intact. At this important stage of Bosnian politics, the international community should keep in mind that there is still a need to help Bosnians to rebuild the old bridges that span rivers and hearts. Such bridges are not only the physical structures across the Neretva, Bosna, Una, Drina and Sava rivers, but, more importantly, the social, political and economic bridges. To be more precise, economic and judicial reform, building State institutions and ensuring the speedy return of refugees and displaced persons will serve as the cement that strengthens the true bridges that connect the hearts and minds of the Bosnian people.

Ms. Ognjanovac (Croatia): Croatia remains vitally interested in developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The fact that Croats are one of the three constituent peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina is not the only reason for our interest. The stability of Bosnia and Herzegovina has direct relevance to the stability and, moreover, the prosperity of Croatia itself. The shape and length of our country's border with Bosnia and Herzegovina alone supports this argument. Both countries rely heavily on each other's traffic infrastructures and are important trade partners. It is therefore quite clear why my Government firmly supports a stable and politically, institutionally and economically self-sustainable Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It is encouraging to see that most, if not all, of the political parties that participated in the recent elections expressed their will to live in a common State, and to contribute to its prosperity. The political parties that won the majority of the voters' support deserve to be given a chance to prove their trustworthiness. If there is something that may be taken as worrisome, it is probably the low voter turnout. Only 55 per cent of the electorate voted, a figure very similar to that of those who voted in Serbia's presidential election. Surely that is an indicator of resignation and fatigue.

For some time, Croatia has been drawing the attention of the international community to the main contradiction within Bosnia and Herzegovina's constitutional structure, namely, the integrity of the country on the one hand, and its de facto partition on the other. Dayton tried to reconcile the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina through pledges to create joint institutions that, in turn, were to secure their respective basic interests and preserve the values of a multiethnic society. The pledge to reverse ethnic cleansing and restore the pre-war demographic composition fed people's hopes and raised expectations.

At the same time, Dayton did not provide any guidance about how to manage the built-in conceptual contradiction of the peace agreement. The Croats, as the smallest constituent nation, cannot rely on the same factors as the other two constituent nations to protect their identity and interests, such as size and a separate entity. Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina can lend their trust only to a political system that guarantees them the preservation of their national, cultural and religious identity, and allows them to be genuinely represented in all joint institutions.

The present constitutional arrangement is the one that could be agreed upon by all sides at the time it was negotiated. Even though it has not been fully implemented, it has served the primary purpose of the

Peace Accord, that is, to stop the bloodshed. The constitutional structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina must continue to develop and evolve with the dynamics of the country's political, economic and social life. That is the road to a democratic and self-sustainable Bosnia and Herzegovina. As the High Representative correctly observed in one of his recent speeches, Dayton is the floor and not the ceiling.

Cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia is one of the obligations that parties to the Dayton Agreement undertook when signing the Agreement. A major breakthrough has been made with the arrest of Slobodan Milosevic and with the indictments against him being extended to the crimes committed in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The indictments will bring justice for the victims, and also serve the establishment of historical records concerning the events in the former Yugoslavia. Consequently, this will ultimately benefit reconciliation among the people of the region.

On a more sombre note, we simply cannot accept that two of the most wanted indictees — Messrs. Karadzic and Mladic — are still at large. We sincerely hope that their time is finally running out, and that those who are in a position to arrest them will do so. There can be no sustainable Bosnia and Herzegovina with Karadzic and Mladic at large.

What is it that needs to be done to put Bosnia and Herzegovina irreversibly onto the road to statehood as a member of the European Union, as Lord Ashdown so eloquently put it recently? The reform proposals recently made by the High Representative are very well founded and deserve to be seriously considered. Strengthening the role of the State, reducing the complexity of the administrative system and ensuring a merit system in the selection and job security of civil servants are some of the measures that deserve our attention.

The justice system should definitely be among the priorities. Many countries in transition are plagued with corruption, and Bosnia and Herzegovina is no exception. Victory over this disease will create favourable conditions for foreign direct investment, and will benefit the country in the long run.

We also hope that authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina will find incentives for young people to remain in the country and to attract those who are willing to come back from abroad. Fresh ideas, innovation and open minds are only a few of the many benefits that young generations bring.

Membership in the Council of Europe represents a good starting point for Bosnia and Herzegovina in the process that should eventually culminate in European Union membership. We will do our utmost to provide help and assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina, because we need a stable neighbour and partner we can count on in our common European future.

Mr. Kirn (Slovenia): Slovenia fully associates itself with the statement made earlier by the Permanent Representative of Denmark on behalf of the European Union.

Having been actively engaged in the international community's efforts in Bosnia and Herzegovina since the beginning, I would like to express some additional views in my national capacity.

We consider today's debate as an important and appropriate occasion to give new impetus to international efforts to build a prosperous, stable and European-oriented Bosnia and Herzegovina. Bosnia and Herzegovina stands at an important juncture in the process of consolidating its State. It should continuously demonstrate its determination to create a modern European State with effective government, stable institutions and rising standards in public life.

Today's Bosnia and Herzegovina faces some arduous tasks: strengthening the rule of law, creating a stable and friendly economic environment and fighting the corruption and organized crime that distort the path of economic and political development. The authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina will have to work hard and with strengthened responsibility to meet the challenges ahead. Not only will they have to work hard to meet the requirements and expectations of the international community, they will first have to meet the expectations of their own peoples. Yet, the challenges confronting Bosnia and Herzegovina remain too numerous to be faced alone. International assistance is still needed.

The experience of the international community in Bosnia and Herzegovina shows that much progress has already been achieved. Slovenia welcomes the active role of the international community in Bosnia and Herzegovina and considers that a continued international presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina is

vital to achieving the aims that the international community set out seven years ago.

The departure of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) should not serve to scale down the international community's political support and financial resources. The agencies of the United Nations, along with regional organizations, should continue to encourage and assist Bosnia and Herzegovina to face the remaining challenges. In that respect, the European Union police mission that will take over in Bosnia and Herzegovina on 1 January 2003 is of particular importance.

Our work should more vigorously address the people and their needs, finding areas of leverage that will consolidate political stability, peace and security and spark an economic revival. Slovenia is interested in the peace, political stability and functioning economy of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We have demonstrated that interest through economic cooperation and our ongoing support for the integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina into European structures.

Slovenia is actively participating in the stabilization processes in Bosnia and Herzegovina. By establishing the International Trust Fund for Demining and the Regional Centre for the Psychosocial Well-being of Children, it seeks to contribute to improving the daily lives of ordinary people who continue to be affected by the legacy of war.

Slovenia actively participates in the process of stabilization of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Through the establishment of the International Trust Fund for Demining and the Regional Centre for the Psychosocial Well-being of Children, it wants to contribute to ameliorating the daily life of ordinary people who continue to be affected by the legacy of war. Slovenia is actively taking part in the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe and is a troop-contributing country to the Stablization Force.

We continue to believe that the revival of the economy of Bosnia and Herzegovina is vital for the stabilization and prosperity of the country and of the region. In addition to liberalizing trade and providing a favourable investment climate, our efforts should be aimed at better utilizing the skills and energy of local human resources and at making better use of the country's natural resources. Creating jobs, generating incentives for the development of small and medium-size enterprises, and encouraging skilled trained people to stay in their home country are some of the important tasks today facing both the international community and the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In recent years, Slovenia has been one of the biggest foreign investors in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and it continues to be a strong advocate of economic cooperation with Bosnia and Herzegovina at all levels.

We strongly support the efforts of the High Representative to strengthen the rule of law and to build a solid judicial system. Slovenia was among the strongest supporters of membership for Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Council of Europe, which provides good opportunities to exercise the rule of law. Integration into European structures provides a firm guarantee of the consolidation of democracy and stabilization of the country and the entire region, in all aspects.

In conclusion, let me emphasize that Slovenia shares the view that the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, expressed last month to the Security Council, that the outcome of the recent elections was a call for a change. That call by the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina has to be transformed into their active engagement in the process of consolidating their State, based on European standards of good governance and sound domestic economic policies that foster growth and development. The international community should spare no effort to continue to support the endeavours of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina in assuming their overall responsibility for their future. Slovenia is determined to continue its active participation in those efforts.

Mr. Haneda (Japan): Japan highly commends Bosnia and Herzegovina for its achievements in implementing the peace process over the past year, such as its admission to the Council of Europe, the amendment of the Constitutions of the two entities to ensure equality among the three main ethnic groups and the holding of self-organized elections. We also appreciate the efforts of the High Representative, Mr. Paddy Ashdown, the members of the Peace Implementation Council, and all those who have participated in the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH), the Stabilization Force and other relevant organizations. At the same time, we recognize that much remains to be done pending the day when Bosnia and Herzegovina will stand on its own without the involvement of the international community.

The general elections last month were the first to be conducted by the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina since the end of the conflict in 1995, and were thus an important milestone in the peace implementation process. Recognizing the importance of the elections, the Government of Japan dispatched observers to participate in the monitoring team of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. We also provided support to a United Nations Development Programme project, whose purpose was to raise the consciousness of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina with regard to the importance of the elections.

Japan is encouraged by the fact that the general elections were carried out smoothly, and largely in accordance with international standards. The tenure of the elected officials is four years. That period will be crucially important for the peace implementation process. Japan looks forward to the early formation of a new, effectively functioning Government that will assume responsibility for the future of the country and make every effort to pursue the peace implementation process in cooperation with the international community.

It is particularly important that the elected leaders commit themselves, as a matter of priority, to work together to advance reforms necessary for the establishment of the rule of law and the creation of employment opportunities, as advocated by the High Representative. They will also be expected to address the six elements of the reform agenda that Mr. Ashdown set out last month. Corruption and organized crime are also issues that demand their urgent attention.

It is essential that the new Government cooperate with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. We call upon the newly elected officials and all other parties concerned to fully support the activities of the Tribunal and to surrender all those who have been indicted. We urge Bosnia and Herzegovina to restructure its justice system as a whole and to develop the national capacity to prosecute less serious war crimes.

Let me briefly refer to the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Japan notes with satisfaction that UNMIBH has made commendable progress in police reform, border control and the return of members of minority groups, and that it is in the final stages of implementing its core mandate. That, indeed, is a good example of a successful exit strategy of a United Nations peacekeeping operation. Japan is also pleased to note that the preparations for the transition of responsibility from UNMIBH to the European Union Police Mission are well on track.

Japan has been an active member of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council. We have pledged and are steadily implementing a donation of approximately $500 million to assist in the reconstruction of Bosnia and Herzegovina in various areas including transportation, food, medical services, education, mine clearance and refugee returns. Japan, in cooperation with the rest of the international community, will continue its steadfast support of the peace implementation process in the belief that the stability and prosperity of Bosnia and Herzegovina are crucial to the peace and development of South-Eastern Europe as a whole.

In closing, I am pleased to voice Japan's support for the draft resolution before us in document A/57/L.15/Rev.1.

Mr. Šahović (Yugoslavia): This debate is taking place between two important events in Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the beginning of October, the first locally organized general elections took place. At the end of next month, the United Nations will complete its mandate there and will be replaced by a European Union mission. Both events testify to the overall positive developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina since last year's debate in the General Assembly.

My delegation would like to acknowledge the significant contribution of the outgoing United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) to stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and thus in the region as a whole. We are looking forward to a smooth transition to the European Union mission and express our confidence in its equally constructive engagement in the future.

Cooperation and the development of stable and friendly relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina are among the top objectives of Yugoslavia's foreign policy. I am pleased to be able to state that, both bilaterally and regionally, important progress has been achieved over the past year in pursuing those goals. Our two countries maintain a regular dialogue on many issues of mutual interest and the tangible results are in evidence.

The Inter-State Council for Cooperation met earlier this year in Belgrade at the highest political level. A number of ministerial and other high-level official visits were also exchanged. I would like to underline in particular the importance of the trilateral meeting in July of the heads of State of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Yugoslavia in Sarajevo. We expect another similar summit in the future.

Allow me to mention also just a few concrete examples of an upward trend characterizing our cooperation. The negotiations on border identification between the two countries are progressing and over 50 per cent of the borderline has been identified. In addition to the Free Trade Agreement, our two countries have recently signed an agreement on dual citizenship that will significantly facilitate the exercise of rights of citizens on both sides of the border. These agreements, together with the existing non-visa regime, are aimed at ensuring a free flow of people and goods across our border. Agreements on road transportation and social insurance have also been signed, while several other bilateral agreements are currently in preparation.

This active cooperation is conducted on the basis of full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and within the framework of the Dayton/Paris Agreement. Yugoslavia remains fully committed to the implementation of the Agreement and to the fulfilment of its obligation in that regard.

Both our countries are also engaged in intensive efforts to achieve stability and cooperation within regional organizations, particularly within the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe and the South-East European Cooperation Process, which Yugoslavia is currently chairing. These forums are particularly important in giving a direction to the implementation of regionally shared objectives, such as the enhancement of democracy and the rule of law, the development of the market economy, respect for human rights, and combating terrorism and organized crime.

Although, as I have mentioned, a lot has been achieved in normalizing and improving the relations between Yugoslavia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, much remains to be done to overcome the difficult legacy of the 1990s. To that end, we are looking forward to cooperating with the new Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina. One issue requires particular attention. While some 60,000 returns to and within Bosnia and Herzegovina have been registered in 2002, there are still some 400,000 refugees remaining in my country. Obviously, further joint efforts, both bilateral and regional, are necessary to speed up the return process.

Finally, I would like to commend the continuing efforts of High Representative Lord Ashdown in accelerating the process of reform and institution-building in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We share the view that this is the best way to enable the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina to take responsibility for their country into their own hands, through their elected representatives. My country stands ready to cooperate fully within the regional framework and as a regional partner in pursuing this goal.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/57/L.15/Rev.1. I must advise the General Assembly that, in addition to the countries listed on the draft resolution, the United States of America has become a sponsor.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.15/Rev.1?

Draft resolution A/57/L.15/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 57/10).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 34?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 38

The situation in Central America: procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace and progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development

Reports of the Secretary-General (A/57/384, A/57/584)

Note by the Secretary-General (A/57/336)

Mr. Brattskar (Norway): Since the conclusion of the peace agreements in Guatemala, Norway has actively supported the implementation process. We will

continue to do so next year as well. Since the last Regional Consultative Group meeting in Washington in February, some important advances have taken place, but we do not feel that there has been a true acceleration in the implementation of the peace accords.

As the Secretary-General points out in his report, in some areas backsliding is apparent and the greater respect for human rights that was apparent after the 1996 ceasefire has eroded over the last year. Violations against and harassment of human right defenders continue and, as the report points out, violations by the police have increased. Ghosts from the past, in the shape of illegal groups and clandestine structures, apparently still exist. This gives cause for concern, and it is clear that more decisive action by the Government is needed. We also share the concern expressed by the Secretary-General that stagnation in the implementation of the peace accords, coupled with deterioration in other areas, could jeopardize progress made since 1996. We strongly hope that the Government, in cooperation with civil society, will do its utmost to continue implementing the accords, as well as the nine points that came out of the Washington meeting in February. We look forward to the next meeting of the Consultative Group, which we hope will take place in Guatemala in March 2003.

Part of our support for the peace process has been through contributions to maintain the presence of the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA). We support the prolongation of MINUGUA through 2003. Unfortunately, the planned ending of MINUGUA would coincide with the Guatemalan change of Government following elections in the autumn of 2003. It is doubtful whether adequate mechanisms to replace the functions of MINUGUA will have been put in place before that time. My Government considers it important that the implementation process not be left to itself in this crucial period. Norway therefore supports the extension of the mandate of MINUGUA, in the form of a restricted presence, for one more year until the end of 2004. The focus of this restricted presence should be on human rights, indigenous rights and the role of the army in a democratic society. It is, however, of the highest importance that the Guatemalan authorities as soon as possible establish mechanisms that can take over MINUGUA's mission.

Many of the countries in Central America have long been riddled with corruption, something that can cripple any attempt at development. It is therefore with great interest that we observe the struggle against corruption that is taking place in these countries, particularly Nicaragua.

Finally, we congratulate the facilitators of the process concerning the border dispute between Guatemala and Belize. We hope the proposals put forward by them will lead to a final and permanent settlement of the issue.

Mr. Moesby (Denmark): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, as well as the country of the European Economic Area that is a member of the European Free Trade Association — Iceland — align themselves with this statement.

Let me first express the gratitude of the European Union to the Secretary-General for the excellent and insightful report on the situation in Central America, which provides a solid foundation for today's discussion on this agenda item.

The European Union and Central America form a strong partnership based on fundamental principles and shared hopes for a better future. The European Union wishes to continue to develop this partnership in order to establish progress and lasting peace in the region founded on democratic principles of peace, freedom and development.

Much has changed in Central America in the almost 20 years since we first discussed this agenda item. Democracy has prevailed. Conflicts have been brought to an end. Progress and development have been allowed to settle and prosper in the region. However, despite the important steps taken, the risk of serious setbacks in the democratic process continues. We still see the long shadows of the internal conflicts, the difficulties of transition to systems of democratic pluralism and the challenges of equitable and sustainable development. These obstacles remain in the way of lasting peace, freedom and economic prosperity in the region.

Central America must face the difficult problems in the region in order to consolidate the substantial progress made so far. Reforms, and the courage to implement them, are necessary in fighting social inequalities, unemployment and poverty. Otherwise these will feed political tension and conflict.

The European Union has always been committed to the development of Central America. Through our Framework Co-operation Agreement and Community Action Plan for the Reconstruction of Central America this commitment has materialized into concrete actions and activities. Our efforts focus on regional integration and in sectors such as health, education and environmental protection.

Since 1984, political cooperation between the European Union and Central America has been institutionalized in the San José Dialogue. Ministers of our two regions met at the XVIII Ministerial Conference of the San José Dialogue, held in Madrid in May this year. At the Conference, the ministers confirmed their commitment to the consolidation of democratic systems, the establishment of closer economic and trade relations and the promotion of human development. They also reaffirmed their commitment to peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with international law.

Based on these commitments we agreed to bring our biregional dialogue towards a newer stage of more dynamic and substantial relations. This was a decision that we believe will be beneficial to both the European Union and Central America.

The European Union this year has observed, with the greatest concern, a deterioration of the human rights situation in Guatemala. Particularly worrying is the serious increase in the threats and assaults directed against human rights defenders. We condemn these acts in the strongest possible terms. The Guatemalan authorities have a clear obligation to protect those who are targeted and to bring those responsible to justice. The widespread impunity in Guatemala must come to an end.

The United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA) has performed remarkably well in consolidating the achievements of the peace agreement. The European Union takes note of the Secretary General's intention to initiate consultations with interested Member States regarding the request of the Guatemalan Government for an extension of MINUGUA's mandate into 2004. The European Union underlines the importance of MINUGUA completing its tasks in the human rights field before gradually handing over its mandate to independent national authorities of Guatemala, bearing in mind the political calendar of Guatemala in 2003. We believe that the ombudsman institution could have an important role to play when MINUGUA's tasks are handed over. We intend to provide the necessary support to that end.

The Government and the parliament of Guatemala must fulfil their responsibilities, in accordance with the peace process, if the democratic process is to succeed. This includes full implementation of the Fiscal Pact, ensuring transparency in public spending and intensifying the fight against corruption. Guatemala must initiate land reforms, ensure respect of the rights of the indigenous population and establish civilian control over State intelligence agencies. These steps are crucial for revitalising the peace process. Just like Guatemalan people, the European Union hopes for a peaceful and prosperous future for Guatemala.

We believe that political and economic integration is of key importance to the future development of Central America. Successful regional integration will lead to a successful integration into the world economy as a whole. The European Union therefore wholeheartedly supports the important work by the Central American Integration System. Drug trafficking, increasing crime rates and labour migration within the region are examples of regional challenges that the Central American countries have to face in unison in order to overcome them.

In the context of political integration, the European Union is delighted to note the progress made to find a just, equitable and definitive solution to the border dispute between Belize and Guatemala. We hope that the settlement of the dispute will open a new era of understanding, cooperation and friendship between the two countries and become a source of inspiration for other countries in the region. The European Union recognizes the importance played by the Organization of American States (OAS) in facilitating the agreement between Belize and Guatemala, and we reiterate our support for OAS initiatives to settle the remaining disputes in the region. These initiatives deserve our full encouragement.

Nicaragua is changing, and important steps have been taken to ensure its citizens a better and safer future. We fully support the efforts of President Bolaños to raise ethical standards in public life, to fight the scourge of corruption and to modernize and rationalize the Nicaraguan economy.

The reforms advocated by the Government are essential in order to strengthen the rule of law and democratic institutions. The European Union accordingly urges other State institutions in Nicaragua to collaborate with President Bolaños in his efforts to meet the challenges ahead.

This year we have joined the people of El Salvador in their celebration of the tenth anniversary of the peace agreements. The European Union wishes to congratulate El Salvador on this important anniversary that put an end to the 12 tragic years of conflict in that country. The agreement set a guiding example of how to reach peaceful political solutions for the benefit of the people and for peace and stability of Central America.

The European Union also wishes to commend El Salvador for the appointment of a new Ombudsman — or in point of fact an Ombudswoman — to the office of the national Ombudsman. The Ombudsman institution has a key role to play in protecting the rights of vulnerable and marginalized sectors of the population, such as poor and indigenous people. The European Union therefore applauds the work of the Ombudsman institutions in Central America; they are indispensable watchdogs of democracy.

The European Union welcomes and supports the efforts of the new Government of Honduras under President Maduro to address the problems related to poverty, corruption and social disintegration, which challenge the maturing democracy of that country. However, the European Union is concerned about the ongoing violence, as well as the recent worrying increase in human rights violations. The European Union underscores the need for stronger Government measures to protect and safeguard the rule of law, in accordance with international human rights and humanitarian law. Also, the high number of killings of children and youth is a source of great concern for the Union. It therefore calls for further efforts of the Government of Honduras, under President Maduro, to address the disturbing situation.

The European Union is paying close attention to the situation in Central America. Our partnership is one of mutual respect, and we wish to strengthen our future political and economic cooperation. Strengthening democracy, fighting social inequalities, promoting efficient government and protecting human rights go hand in hand with peace, sustainable development and the creation of favourable conditions for markets and trade. These are ambitions that we share with the people of Central America.

Programme of work

The Acting President: On Thursday morning, 14 November, the General Assembly will hear the remaining speakers on agenda item 38, "The situation in Central America: procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace and progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development", and will also consider agenda item 167, "South American Zone of Peace and Cooperation".

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.